

Planning a future...



for brown pelicans

The story of the brown pelican, *Pelecanus occidentalis*, is one of our great environmental success stories in America- the rare story of a great comeback despite the odds. The brown pelican population dropped precipitously low in the 1960s and 1970s due to impacts from the chemical pesticide DDT. After DDT was banned in 1972, brown pelicans made a near-miraculous recovery, and were officially removed from the endangered species list in 2009.

Now these striking and impressive birds can be seen gliding over the water and dive-bombing fish up and down the North Carolina coast. Their success story combining advocacy, science, and perseverance made them the perfect symbol for the Coastal Federation as well, as we strive for a healthy coast in North Carolina.



Today, pelicans face a new threat in North Carolina - one from nature rather than chemicals.

Beacon Island is the oldest nesting site for brown pelicans in the state, supporting up to 900 nesting pairs. This wind-swept island of marsh and mud flats is just three miles from Ocracoke





in the Pamlico Sound. An *Important Bird Area*, the island is home to one of the state's largest colonies of brown pelicans, as well as laughing gulls, american oystercatchers , clapper rails, herring gulls, great-black-backed gulls and forster's terns. The shallow waters surrounding the island teem with diving and puddle ducks, as well as brant during the winter.

Today there are 558 pairs of pelicans - 13% of the state's pelican population - nesting on Beacon Island. It is one of only nine remaining nesting sites in the state.

However, this important nesting habitat faces serious erosion from storms, wind tides, and sea level rise. **Given time, the pelican's island habitat will disappear without our help.**

Together, we can prevent that from happening.

Last year, the Coastal Federation partnered with local fishermen and the Ocracoke Working Watermen's Association to test several methods of stabilizing the shoreline using oyster bags and wetland plants. Because the island is surrounded by relatively deep water and is often buffeted by high winds and waves, we'll need an innovative approach to protect it.

Using the information from last year's test projects, we are ready to develop a master plan to protect and restore the pelicans' nesting habitat- *but we need your help to complete that plan.*

Please join us in protecting this spectacular island and help provide a more stable future for the brown pelican on our coast.

With your help, we can make Beacon Island more resilient to erosion from storms and sea level rise. With your help, we can secure a place for brown pelicans in North Carolina for the future.



The Coastal Federation's Annual Report, audit, and 990 can be found on our website at www.nccoast.org or mailed by request. Financial information about this organization and a copy of its license are available from the State Solicitation Licensing Branch at 919-807-2000. The license is not an endorsement by the State.